

EX. 1881.2/4  
400.A.79

# FRAGMENTS

FROM THE

# CRYSTAL PALACE.

BY

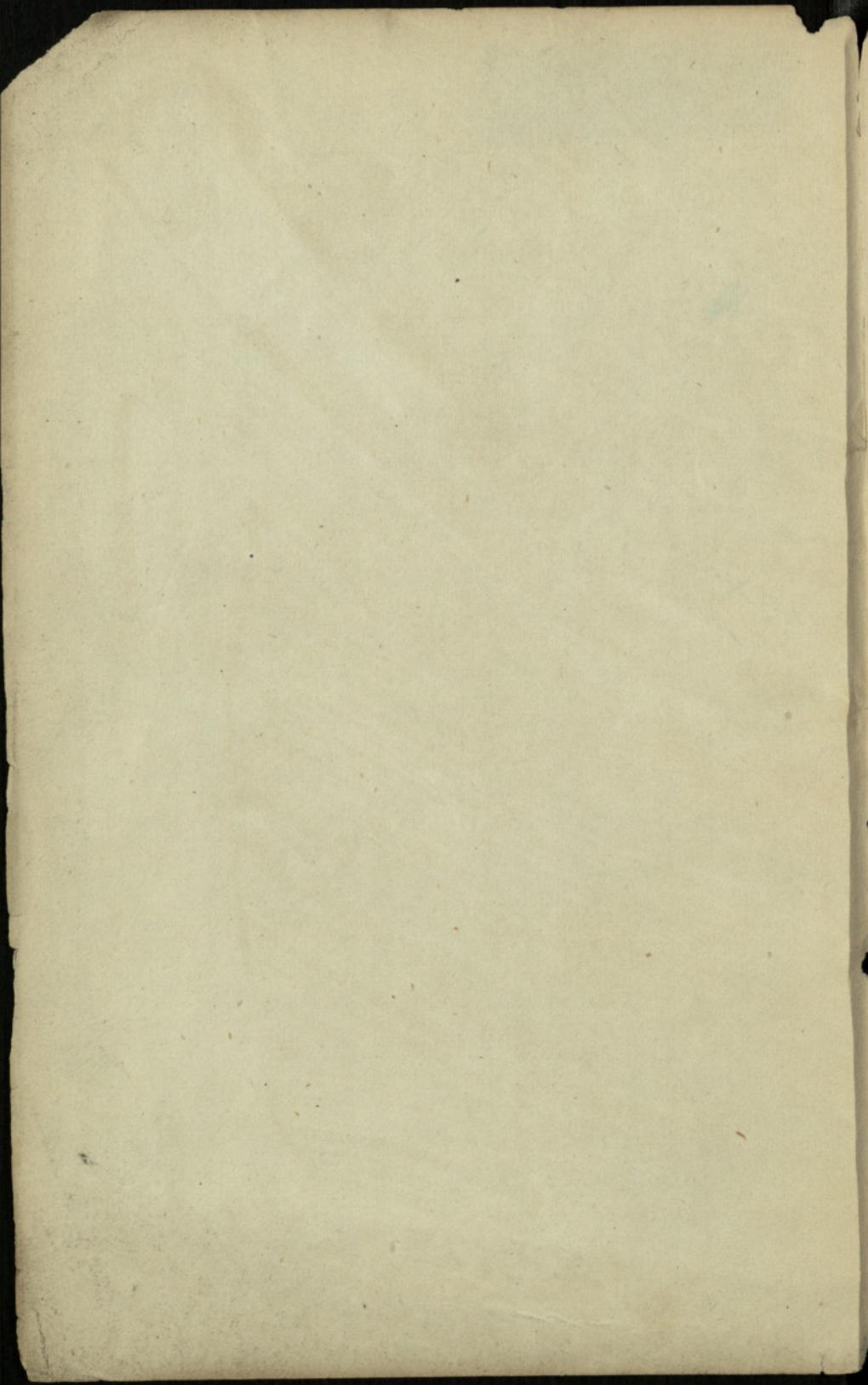
E. LEATHES.



LONDON:

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16, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.



FRAGMENTS  
MOTHERS  
CRYSTAL PALACE  
R. LEATHES.



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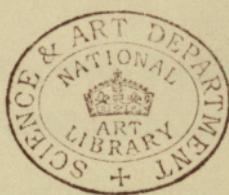
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F R A G M E N T S  
FROM THE  
CRYSTAL PALACE.

BY  
E. LEATHES.



LONDON:  
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## F R A G M E N T S

FROM THE

## C R Y S T A L P A L A C E .

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THERE are moments of enchantment  
With unfading mem'ries rife,  
Through the mists of time and sorrow  
Haunting all our after life !

Such was that, O Crystal Palace,  
When I stood within thy walls ;  
Not the first time or the second  
I had sought those fairy halls.

I was there at length unfetter'd  
By communion with my kind ;  
Free to roam where fancy led me,  
With no voice my thoughts to bind.

First I paid a farewell visit  
To each treasure gather'd there ;  
Asking not, in hermit-spirit,  
One my lonely joys to share !

Dreamy Sculpture most enchain'd me,  
With her spiritual face ;  
Ling'ring long where Milan's Monti  
Veil'd his Vestal's matchless grace.

Long—yet longer stay'd my footsteps,  
Where, in shackled loveliness,  
*That sweet statue's* voiceless pleadings  
Seem'd to ask *a world's* redress.

Hiram Powers ! if spirit-homage  
From each yearning poet-breast  
Form the living wreath of genius,  
That upon *thy brows* shall rest !

With full soul I stood enraptured,  
Gazing on the breathing stone ;  
Noble in its simple grandeur,—  
Touching in its anguish lone.

Turn'd I next where stately Russia  
Waved her eagle's jewelled wings ;  
Priceless malachite displaying,  
With her rare and lovely things.

Down the Nave, all filled with statues ;  
Greeting Prussia, Austria, France—  
*France*, whose gorgeous Gobelin paintings  
Claim'd at least one parting glance !

Switzerland ! thy broider'd dresses,  
With the glitt'ring gems of Spain,  
And our Koh-i-Noor so precious,  
Might not then my steps detain.

Yet I linger'd where fair Pæstum  
Crown'd the blue sea's lonely strand ;  
Musing on the fallen greatness  
Of that bright Ausonian land !

Hills of Greece, so sweet and thymy ;  
Isles of the Egean waves ;  
City, whose serails the Bosphorus  
With its golden waters laves :

I could leave ye all, unweeping,  
At that Eastern shrine to bow,  
Where, enrobed in fragrant garments,  
*India* raised her gem-wreath'd brow.

Rich and rare, O dusky Sister,  
Were the off"rings thou hadst brought—  
Yet less precious than our loved ones  
Who thy distant home have sought !

Britain ! all thy varied products—  
Science, manufactures, arts,  
Well might wake the proudest feelings  
Of thy loyal children's hearts !

Must I leave unsung your glories,  
With a world of beauteous things,  
To whose loveliness surpassing  
Still my mem'ry fondly clings?

Dante's window—Lough's pale "Mourners"—  
Sad Rimini's fated pair—  
She whose " Trust in God" beam'd sweetly  
From a face divinely fair.

Dorothea—the veil'd Circassian—  
 Una—and “ the Amazon”—  
 Wyatt's Nymphs—and that Greek Hunter,  
 Waking thoughts of Marathon !

Tempt me not ! bright forms are flashing,  
 Vision-like, around me now—  
*I* should weave a worthless garland  
 For a half-celestial brow.

*I* but speak in falt'ring accents,  
 When *I* praise some gem of art ;  
 Like a child, whose broken language  
 Paints imperfectly its heart.

*Other voices*—sweeter, nobler,  
 Shall be eloquent ere long :  
 Treasures, gather'd from all nations,  
 Must be garner'd up in song !

Crystal Palace ! thou wert lovely  
In the golden morning's prime ;  
With the sunlight on thy fountains—  
Hark ! I hear their silv'ry chime !

I am standing in the Transept,  
Where the light spray gems my brow :  
Ah ! a zephyr, ent'ring softly,  
Kisses off those tear-drops now.

Rare exotics, waving round me,  
Breathe a tale of sunnier shores ;  
Yet *thy roses*, O ! my country,  
*First* this loving heart adores !

Look adown the wondrous structure,  
Where the chequer'd shadows play ;  
See the scatter'd groups increasing,  
Wending up the domêd way.

Yet the silence reigns unbroken,  
Save some hush'd tread passing by—  
As all hear, in vast cathedrals,  
Footfalls echoing stealthily.

Day wears on—the morning's freshness  
Fadeth into soberer hues ;  
While a strange low hum of voices  
Each aërial wave imbues.

Seek I now some loftier station,  
In this crowded solitude ;  
There to solve the deep heart-questions  
Which in such a scene intrude !

Hark ! the Sommerophone is pealing  
Forth its clear melodious blast ;  
Hark ! sweet spells of Erard's weaving,  
Now their chains around me cast !

Lift thine eyes ; for Beauty standeth,

As a goddess, smiling near—

Veil thy gaze ; ah ! still she charms thee,

Like a syren, through thine ear !

Once more up that north-east gallery,

Where in “ dim, religious light,”

Stained glass, with quaint old story,

Falleth, dream-like, on the sight.

*Need I tell* what beauteous visions

With those changing scenes were blent ?

Lovely landscapes, antique legends,

Still a fresh enchantment lent.

*Need I say* how deep my spirit

Drank of each new fount of joy ?

Life *has some* few golden moments,

*Some* delights which never cloy.

Many such that day gave birth to—  
Pearls on thought's still length'ning string ;  
Fair oases in earth's desert ;  
Silver plumes for mem'ry's wing.

'Twas the hour when daylight deepens  
Gently into softer eve,  
When the throbbing breast seems calmer,  
Though the lonely heart may grieve ;

When the *laugh of mirth* grows fainter,  
Yet the *smile of peace* more sweet ;  
When Love's holy bands clasp closer,  
And time-sever'd spirits greet :

I had mounted where Gray's Organ,  
Swell'd full-toned on the ear ;  
And I heard its solemn music,  
Like the surges, rolling near.

Far before me, in dim distance,  
Stretched that fairy-like arcade ;  
Glorious objects faintly looming,  
Through the half-mysterious shade.

Down the Nave, in constant motion,  
Poured a mighty human tide ;  
Sound of footsteps ceasing never,  
Through that temple vast and wide.

Rome ! *in war alone* thy Janus  
Opened the portals of his shrine ;  
But the fane of our Concordia  
Had a mission more divine !

There the children of all countries  
Met in peaceful rivalry ;  
Members they, though widely scatter'd,  
Of God's human family.

How describe what deep emotions  
Then my musing spirit filled ?  
Each immortal thought, swift-wing'd,  
Some responsive heart-string thrill'd.

Clear the Past lay stretched before me,  
By the Present's magic spell ;  
Mighty nations, world-famed heroes,  
All that Clio's scroll can tell.

Next the Future, dim and shadowy,  
In her chequer'd garments rose.  
Who may shun her fateful advent?  
Who her dread decrees oppose ?

Yet is man a great free agent,  
Working good or ill below ;  
While his individual forces  
Cause the social stream to flow.

Let then each one labour nobly  
In his own appointed sphere ;  
Nor despondingly look forward,  
There is *sunshine* even *here*.

Sunshine in the path of duty,  
Sunshine in our brother's weal ;  
Sunshine in the thought we're treading,  
In the footsteps of "the Leal."

Thus I ponder'd, cheer'd and tranquil,  
Till bright reveries were mine ;  
And that lovely Crystal Palace  
Seem'd with holier light to shine.

Who shall say what dreams of beauty  
Broke upon each inward sense ?  
Angel wings were waving o'er me,  
In that ecstasy intense.

And my ear caught spirit-voices,  
Chaunting lays of peace and love ;  
And my eye saw scenes celestial,  
From the seraph world above.

Yet, athwart those glorious visions,  
Rose, ere long, the mists of life ;  
And a deeper spell entrall'd me,  
With Time's sadd'ning mem'ries rife.

And the loved and lost came round me,  
With their sweet and earnest eyes ;  
Denizens of that fair country,  
Which on Heaven's border lies.

All my parted earthly treasures,  
*Some* that I may see no more,  
Till we walk in light together,  
On the golden Hades-shore.

Yet we ever greet Belovêd,  
In the *silent hours of sleep* ;  
And our space-defying spirits  
Hold again communion deep.

Even *day* has holy places,  
Where no more we dwell apart ;  
Fairy-halls where Love abideth,  
Haunted chambers of the heart !

Gladness is there in the knowledge,  
These undying homes will last ;  
When the pageant of life's greatness  
Shall be but a dream long past.

Yes, earth's palaces are doomêd ;  
Time his finger on them lays ;  
And Decay's cold hand for ever  
O'er the harp of glory strays.

This world's beauty hath its waning,

Youth and strength too early fail ;

E'en the songs that breathe of Eden

Blend full oft with sorrow's wail.

But *our spirits* fear no boundary,

Our *true hearts* shall outlive Time ;

And *Love's fadeless flowers* more brightly

Blossom in a Heav'nly clime.

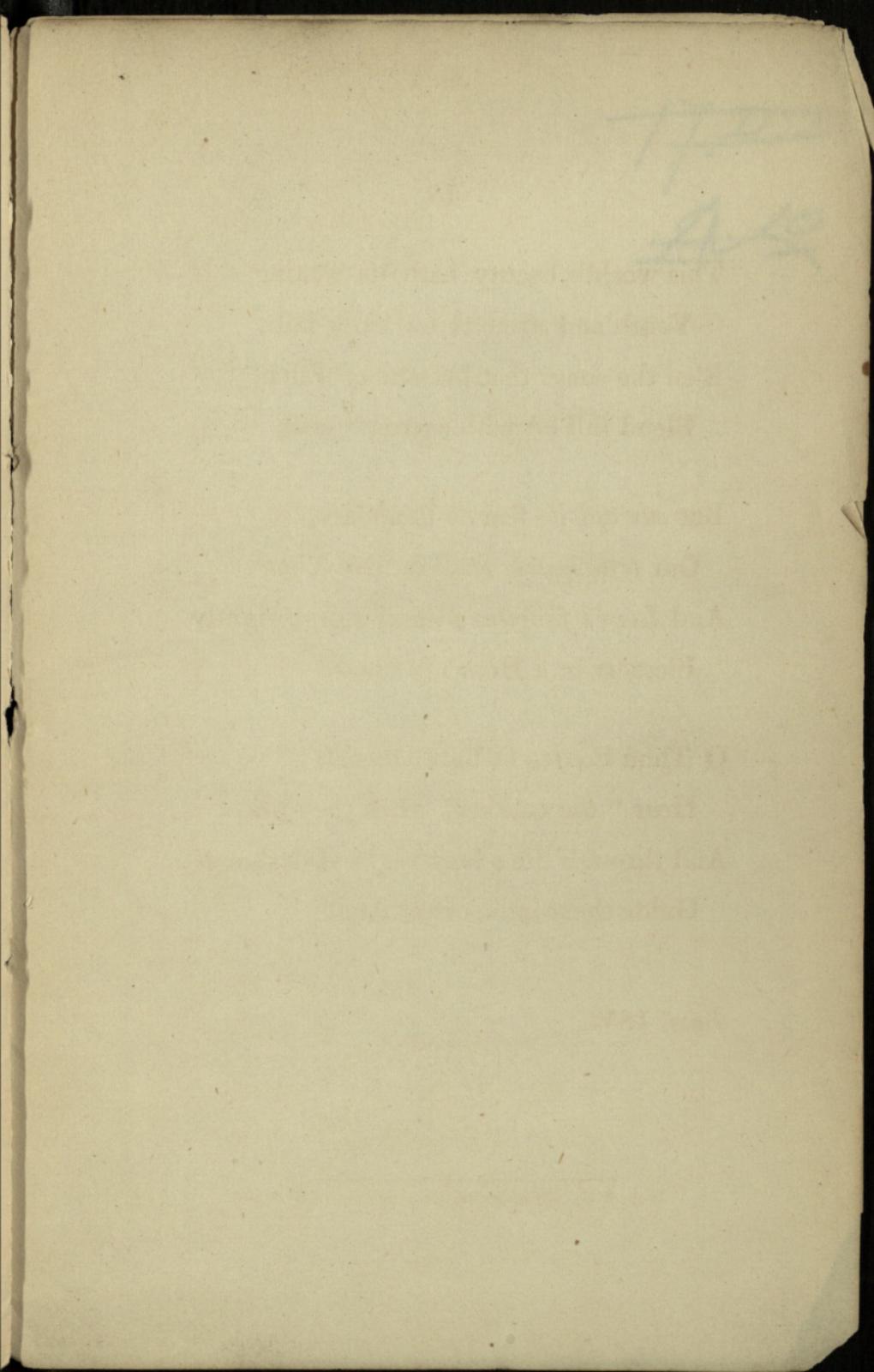
O Thou Source of light eternal,

Hear "the nations" when they pray ;

And through life's long night of darkness

Guide them into perfect day !

*June, 1852.*





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